in this regard and if so, the details thereof and what is the reaction of Government of India in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) Yes Sir, the transit and refuelling facility was provided to US Air Force transport aircraft.

(b) 100 aircrafts.

(c) No, Sir. Government have, however, seen the statement issued by the Government of Iraq on this issue. Government have conveyed to the Government of Iraq that the transit and refuelling facilities provided to US Air Force transport aircraft was solely for the purpose of transporting non-lethal cargo and for evacuating personnel on humanitarian, medical and emergency considerations.

Resrtiction on Dalai Lama's political activities in India

447. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have issued directions restraining Dalai Lama from indulging in political activities in India; and

(b) if so, the details of such directions and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) and (b) Government have all along maintained that H. H. the Dalai Lama, who is a respected religious and spiritual leader, should not conduct political activities on Indian soil, incompatible with Government's well known stand on the status of Tibet.

"Formulation of a new system of Environmental Clearance for Industries"

448. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate a new system of Environmental Clearance for Industries; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

"Flouting of rules by the Museum"

449. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

SHRI N. E. BALARAM:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item captioning "Museum flouts rule, doles out rare fauna to U. S. when preservers turn destroyers" appearing in Indian Express of 4th January, 1991; and

(b) whether any inquiry has been made into the allegations made therein, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) The Government has seen the news item. The Indo-US Herpetological Project is a research project, undertaken by the National Museum of Natural History, New Delhi, in collaboration with Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburg, USA, to study the environmental diversity of the amphibians and reptiles in selected regions of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Such of the specimens collected by field teams from selected sites as require further examination and analysis are sent to Carnegie Museum. The project provides that 50 per cent of the collected specimens will be returned to the National Museum of Natural History after completion of their study at the Carnegie Museum.

Fall-out of new Motor Vehicle Act

450. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI N. E. BALARAM:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the new Motor Vehicle Act(MVA) has provided a windfall to touts at the Regional Transport office and the various zonal offices;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report captioned "Touts and mobile doos who help get licences" appearing in The Hindustan Times dated 14th February, 1991;

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(d) what steps are proposed to be taken by Government to check the touts in the field?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) to (d) Government are aware of the unscrupulous activities of certain persons operating in and around the Regional Transport Office and the various Zonal Offices. Government's attention has also been drawn to the Report captioned "Trouts and mobile docs who help get licences" which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated 14-2-1991.

The Transport Department of the Delhi Administration have, in order to contain unscrupulous activities of certain persons taken action not only to demolish the temporary structures put up by these persons but also remedial steps to ensure that such structures did not come up again. Strict steps have been taken to see that such elements do not gain entry into the Transport Department Offices. Complaint boxes were put up in every office and senior officers were directed to sit from 12.00 Noon to 1.00 PM in their offices to take immediate action against public grievances. Long term measures like opening of new regional offices to reduce the waiting time for applicants were taken, as a result of which new offices were opened at Sheikh Sarai, Janakpuri, Majnu Ka Tila and Loni Road. The issue of application forms were made free and assistance counters were opened in all the zonal offices to assist the general public.

In order to simplify the issue of driving licences, assembly line procedures have been introduced where collection of fees have been mechanised and the waiting period for the applicants reduced substantially.

A constant viligance on unscrupulous elements is being kept and the Transport Department of the Delhi Administration is working in close liaison with the local police.

451. [*Transferred to the 8th March, 1991*]

Destruction of forests due to impact of the Gulf War

452. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that immediate impact of Gulf war would lead to destruction of forests as a panic reaction to LPG shortage;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) whether any requests from various State Governments have been received seeking permission to cut trees due to LPG shortage?

(d) if so, what are the names of these State Governments;

(e) whether any action has been taken on these requests so far; and

(f) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) Government of India have not received any request from State Governments seeking permission to cut trees due to LPG shortage.

(d) to (f) Questions do not arise.